

**Remote Chief Officer Liaison Group Meeting
14:00 Wednesday 8th November 2023
Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Brian Butler (Chair)(BB)	SEStran
Beth Harley-Jepson (BHJ)	SEStran
Cameron Duck (CD)	SEStran
Hattie James (HJ)	SEStran
Keith Fisker (KF)	SEStran
Nikki Boath (NB)	SEStran
Rachael Murphy (RM)	SEStran
Tom Flanagan (TF)	SEStran
Peter Forsyth (PF)	East Lothian Council
Ian Lennock (IL)	East Lothian Council
Lesley Deans (LD)	Clackmannanshire Council
John Mitchell (JM)	Fife Council
Susan Keenlyside (SK)	Fife Council
Keith Luke (KL)	Midlothian Council
Graeme Johnstone (GJ)	Scottish Borders Council
Jamie Robertson (JR)	City of Edinburgh Council
Iain Shaw (IS)	City of Edinburgh Council
Gordon Brown (GB)	West Lothian Council
Alastair Young (AY)	Scotland Futures Trust

Apologies:

Jim Jack	West Lothian Council
David Hanna	City of Edinburgh Council

Ref.		Actions
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence	
	The Chair welcomed the Officers to the meeting and apologies were noted as above. BB introduced 2 new members of SEStran staff – Rachael Murphy – Strategy Manager and Cameron Duck – Communications and Marketing Officer.	
2.	Minutes and Matters Arising	
	The minutes from Wednesday 23 rd August 2023 were agreed as a correct record.	
	Matters arising from previous minutes:	

	<p>AY provided an update regarding collaboration agreements in Scotland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Ayrshire Councils have agreed to collaborate for the expansion of EV charging through a concession model. • The eight authorities which make up Glasgow CRD have agreed to collaborate and are exploring the concession model. • In North Scotland – Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Highlands and Moray are all collaborating with the expansion of both EV and fleet charging. • Shetland, Orkney and Western Isles are working through HiTrans to develop their expanded EV strategy. <p>BB said that the Bus Taskforce has been integrated into SEStran Integrated Mobility Forum. TORs will be now drafted.</p> <p>BB highlighted that SEStran will set up meetings with all Councils in between Chief Officers’ Liaison Group meetings to encourage more of a 2 way process in COLG meetings.</p>	BB
3.	Financial Reports	
	<p>Iain Shaw provided an update on the Financial Reports.</p> <p>IS explained that he is currently in the process of preparing reports for both Performance & Audit Committee and the Partnership Board meetings. At these meetings, IS will provide an update on the progress of developing a budget for 2024/25 as well as an update of the current in-year forecast.</p> <p>IS said that in relation to the 2024/25 budget, the starting point is a roll forward of the Indicative Plan presented at the Partnership Board in March 2023. IS explained that SEStran are currently updating this in relation to current project activity and this will be drafted into the report for P&A Committee next week.</p> <p>IS also mentioned with regard to “flat cash” that there is no change to the external funding sources received from council contributions & TS grant.</p> <p>IS highlighted that one of the challenges is Pay Awards which are higher than recent years. This will need to be factored into financial planning. In the current year, IS explained that there are likely to be no deviations from the set budget and any funds carried forward from last year will be fully spent by end of current financial year.</p>	

4.	Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy	
	<p>BB explained that this Agenda item is to take forward recommendations from the recent EV forum. The next steps to working collaboratively would be discussed at this Chief Officers meeting. These would mainly be in relation to setting up and funding a governance structure.</p> <p>BB presented the slides and outlined the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of Regional EV Strategy and Delivery Plan • Benefits of a Collaborative Approach to EV infrastructure and charging • Steps to date • Recommendations <p>SEStran have received a draft report from Urban Foresight which will be shared with the group next week.</p> <p>BB mentioned that Urban Foresight have outlined a number of proposals for working closely together, and that the emphasis will now shift towards developing a delivery plan.</p> <p>AY explained that transition to delivery is difficult but highlighted that although strategy is very important it is not an end in itself. He also mentioned that there is a window of opportunity to utilise the pooled resource of skills and knowledge within the public sector. There is seed funding available from Transport Scotland (TS) to take procurements to the market to generate income. AY highlighted the importance of a dynamic rolling implementation and delivery plan.</p> <p>AY said the questionnaire sent to local authorities officers highlighted that the consensus is that all local authorities want to deliver this strategy in much the same way.</p> <p>There was a discussion and the following questions were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Scotland timescales - AY stressed that, although the original timescales have not been met, there is still an opportunity to move forward with full TS backing. He highlighted that local authority strategy and expansion plans should be submitted to TS as soon as possible if not already done. TS hope to send Grant Letters out by end of financial year. • PF asked about the required resources commitment. BB responded that there is still work to be done regarding the resource requirement. 	BB

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM reported that Fife Council would consider a report on EVs which will propose a concessionary model and that Fife integrates with the developing SEStran approach, but made it clear that he needed more information to feel comfortable with the approach. This is primarily around the funding proposal and how future levies will work. • LD stated that Clacks and Falkirk are ready to go to market and that the work they had done on procurement models could form a basis for other LAs to follow. LD also said that Clacks would be happy to delay in order to integrate with the other LAs if that offered a better return for them. <p>BB summarised that SEStran will undertake the following points to bring back to next Chief Officers meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate questionnaire table to all partners to document views on governance and funding proposals, including future levies • Work with City Regional Deal PMO, plus Falkirk and Clacks • Determine appropriate decision-making level <p>The next EV forum will actually be the UF workshop to report on and agree the positioning and baselining report and kick off the delivery phase of the UF commission. This is likely to be held on the morning of 24 November.</p>	BB
5.	World Class Bus Service Strategy	
	<p>KF presented slides in relation to the bus strategy and its next steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Regional Bus Strategy to support RTS delivery direction from SEStran Board (June 2023) • RTS feedback – strong case and significant appetite for positive change • Build on and utilise multi- region BPF work business cases • Take an evidence-based (STAG), objective-led, transparent approach involving engagement and consultation • Application made to Community Bus Fund – positive response received • Finalise plan and undertake procurement to progress work • Align with other streams of work, regionally and at local authority levels • Prepare the ground for direct action • Open discussions with stakeholders including Government and Bus Operators for attracting capital and revenue funding to support a world-class bus service 	

6.	RTS Delivery Plan	
	<p>BB provided an update on RTS Delivery Plan.</p> <p>BB said that the ESESCRD Regional Transport Masterplan and the RTS Delivery Plan have been merged, will be called the RTS Delivery Plan, and will apply to all 8 local authorities.</p> <p>BB highlighted that RM will be involved in breaking down the actions in the delivery plan into timescales.</p> <p>PF enquired about data access, and the possibility of having a single repository for all regional transport related data. BB explained that SEStran have been looking at GIS. KF spoke about wider digital twinning work and it was agreed that a workshop be considered as a way of taking this forward.</p>	KF
7.	Active Travel	
	<p>BHJ provided an update on SEStran Strategic Network.</p> <p>Key points that were covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology • Strategic Network phasing • Progress and monitoring • Multi criteria assessment • Next Steps 	
8.	AOCB	
	<p>KF requested that Chief Officers provide details of their Communications and Marketing contacts to Cameron Duck – Cameron.duck@sestran.gov.uk.</p> <p>PF enquired about the Transport Minister meeting in East Lothian regarding the DRT pilot which has been run in East Lothian. BB informed PF that this will take place on 13 December 2023, 9.30am-10.30am. BB explained that an Agenda has to be sent to the Transport Minister by the end of this month. BB mentioned that Cllr McMillan has been invited to the Transport Minister meeting. Following the DRT discussion, a further meeting has been arranged between the Minister, SEStran Chair, Deputy Chairs and Cllr McMillan.</p> <p>HJ will forward PF details of the meeting.</p>	ALL HJ
9.	Date of Next Meeting	
	The proposed date of the next meeting is scheduled for 2:00pm on Wednesday 14 th February 2024.	